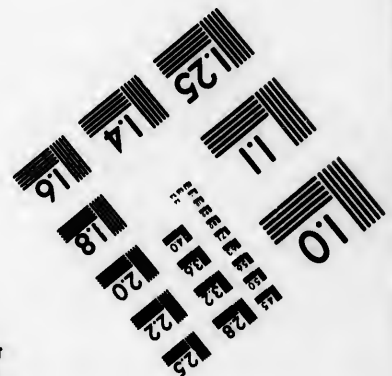
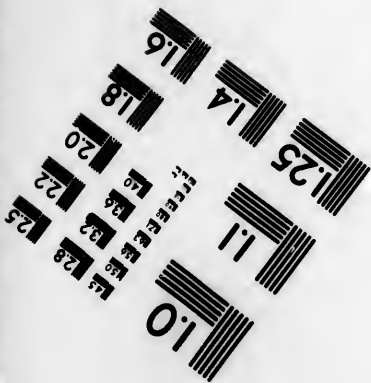
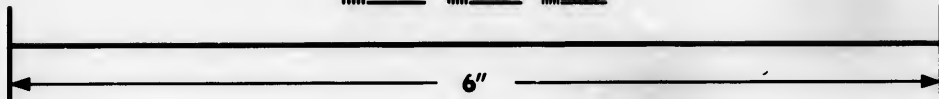
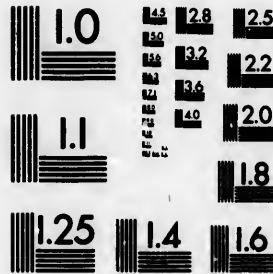


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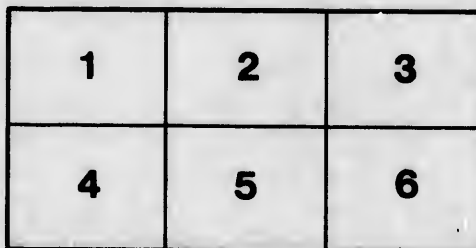
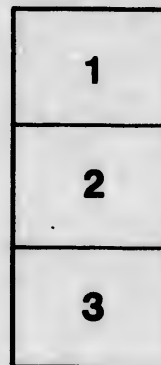
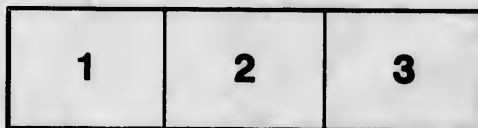
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LETTER,

TO

THE REV. A. N. BETHUNE,

RECTOR OF COBOURG,

ON THE

MANAGEMENT OF GRAMMAR SCHOOLS,

BY

JOHN STRACHAN, D. D. L. L. D.

ARCHDEACON OF YORK.

(York, N.C.)
—◆—
PRINTED BY R. STANTON.

1829.

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*York, Upper Canada,
6th October, 1829.*

DEAR SIR,

You have frequently requested me to give you my thoughts on the management of Grammar Schools, and in doing so to have particular reference to those which are already established in the Province. As several other of my friends, who, as well as you, are Trustees of District Schools, have at different times made the same request, I have felt it my duty to take the matter into serious consideration, and in the hope that my practical experience may be of some use, I send you the following detail.—

To excite among the Inhabitants of the Province a warmer interest in the District Schools than at present exists, the standard of education should be made more respectable than it has hitherto been in many of them, and they should be more particularly directed to the intention of their first establishment, namely, the preparing Youth for the University. At the same time the system of instruction should be such as to qualify young men for the different professions who might not find it convenient, or not be disposed to pursue their studies at a higher Seminary.

These things would, I think, be fully answered by following the course of study subjoined, as it might be accomplished by young men of ordinary talents giving regular attendance, by the time they ought to

leave school, and would fit them either for commencing with profit the study of the different professions, or for distinguishing themselves at the University.

In adopting a general outline of study for the District Schools, the following important advantages are secured :—

First.—A known and uniform system among all the Grammar Schools of the Province.

Second.—The same mode of preparation for the University, at which Students will therefore meet from the different Districts upon equal terms.

Third.—Zeal and emulation among the Teachers to furnish the best Scholars.

Fourth.—A course pointed out by which the Trustees of the District Schools will be enabled to discharge their duties with more satisfaction to themselves and advantage to the public.

Fifth.—Young men thus Educated will find themselves not inferior to those taught at public schools in England, should they have occasion to visit that Country—an important advantage to any who may desire to finish their education at an English University.

EDUCATION.

*Course of Study suitable for the District Schools
throughout the Province.*

First Year—Boys from 7 to 9.

- 1st. **LATIN.**—Eton Grammar—Vocabulary—Corde-rius—Selectæ e Profanis.
- 2nd. **ENGLISH.**—Mavors Spelling Book—Enfield's Lessons—Walkers Lessons—Murrays Lessons ; Blairs Class Book—English Grammar--Writing, and Arithmetic chiefly mental.

Second Year.—Boys from 9 to 11.

- 1st. **LATIN.**—Grammar—Valpys Delectus—New Testament—Baileys Exercises—Exempla Minora—Eutropius—Phædrus—Cornelius Nepos.
- 2nd. **ENGLISH.**—Grammar and Reading as before—Writing and Arithmetic Mental and mixed—Geography—Civil and Natural History and Elocution.
- 3rd. To commence French.

Third Year—Boys from 11 to 13.

- 1st. **LATIN.**—Grammar—Baileys Exercises—Cornelius Nepos—Cæsar—Ovids Metamorphoses—Nonsense verses—Psalms into Latin verse—Exempla Moralia—Versions, or rendering English into Latin.
- 2nd. **GREEK.**—To commence about the middle of the third year.—Eton Grammar, or Nelsons Edition of Moores Grammar—Greek Vocabulary—New Testament—Greek Exercises.

3rd. **ENGLISH.**—Grammar—Writing—Elocution—Civil and Natural History—Geography, ancient and modern—English Composition.

4th. **ARITHMETIC**—And to commence Algebra.

5th. **FRENCH.**

Fourth Year—Boys from 12 to 14.

1st. **LATIN.**—Grammar—Terence—Virgil—Horace—Sallust—Cicero—Livy—Latin Composition, verse and prose—Grotius de veritate—Exempla Moralia.

2nd. **GREEK.**—Eton Grammar—Græca Minora—Greek and Latin Testament—Xenophon—Homer.

3rd. **ENGLISH.**—Grammar and Composition—Civil and Natural History—Geography, ancient and modern,—Use of the Globes—Construction of Maps.

4th. **MATHEMATICS.**—Arithmetic—Book Keeping—Algebra—Euclid.

5th. **FRENCH.**

Fifth Year.—Boys from 14 to 16.

1st. **LATIN.**—Virgil—Horace—Livy—Juvenal—Tacitus—Composition, in Prose and Verse.

2nd. **GREEK**—Græca Majora—Homer—Thucidides; Composition, in Prose and Verse.

3rd. **ENGLISH.**—Grammar and Composition—Elocution—Civil and Natural History—Geography—ancient and modern—Use of Globes—Construction of Maps.

4th. **MATHEMATICS.**—Algebra—Euclid—Trigonometry—Application to heights and distances—Surveying—Navigation—Dialling—Elements of Astronomy, &c.

5th. **FRENCH.**

—◆—

REMARKS.

It will be seen by inspecting this course of study, that the Boys during the first years are carefully exercised in reading their own language, and they continue so to be exercised till they are fit to be removed into the Elocution Class. It is desirable to practise them in Writing every day, or at all events three or four times a week. For Arithmetic, it has been found from experience, that two hours in the week, if rigidly spent in examining tasks previously given out and prepared chiefly at home, is quite sufficient to carry a boy through the whole science in a reasonable time: and that for English Grammar, Civil History, Natural History, Geography and Elocution, respectively, half that time employed in the like examination of lessons, previously assigned and prepared, will completely answer. In mixed Schools, such as our District Schools must necessarily be, boys may be arranged in classes of English Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Geography, &c. who are very different in their classical progress.—For example, it will frequently happen that some who are in their first, second, or even third year as Latin scholars, will form the same class in Arithmetic, English Grammar, Geography, Book Keeping, &c.

The classes in History, Geography, English Grammar and Composition, &c. embracing a long period of five or six years cannot fail of producing great intellectual improvement. Besides the number of branches of knowledge recommended in addition to classical literature, is not only suitable to the present age, but affords almost a certainty that every pupil will find some one at least adapted to his taste and capacity, and in which he may excel, while the whole course may be finished by boys of moderate ability under vigilant Teachers before completing their sixteenth year.

The variety of matters to be taught, renders it desirable to enter somewhat more into detail, that you may see it as it were in actual operation. This is the more necessary because it must frequently happen that Teachers will become from time to time Masters of the District Schools, who though sufficiently capable in point of ability, have acquired little or no experience in the art of teaching, and to such a knowledge of the arrangements required for so complicated a system of instruction, and for an approved mode of discipline must be of the greatest value.

In thus presenting what I consider an excellent outline of study for the Grammar Schools of the Province, I beg leave to state that it is not my intention to inquire whether all the Masters of the District Schools are able to carry it into successful execution; but it may not be thought too much to suggest, that as vacancies happen, the Trustees will do well to advertise for a proper Teacher, and to require the

Candidates to send in their recommendations before the day fixed for their examination, at which it will be the duty of the President of the General Board, should they request him, to attend.

Such a proceeding would insure Teachers well qualified, and remind the Trustees that they are not to consider their Office a Sinecure, but as calling upon them to give vigilant superintendance to see that the master attends regularly, and not only attends, but that he spares no pains to bring forward his pupils.

At the same time there should be no trifling or unnecessary interference with Teachers, as much must, and ought to depend upon their discretion. Even in the system here proposed as well as in the selection of books, I am aware that modifications may be found in practice convenient and advisable by the judicious teacher, and that although it recommends no branch of knowledge that can be safely omitted, something useful may still be added.

DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE SYSTEM.

In presenting a detailed account of the mode of carrying this course of study into effect, I shall not indulge in any imaginary process, but give you the actual practice of a School which flourished twenty-five years in this Province; premising that many experiments were made, and many plans rejected before it arrived at the state of maturity here described.— This School consisted of from 50 to 65 Scholars.

B

GOVERNMENT OF THE SCHOOL.

The management of every well regulated School, resolves itself into the two great departments of Government and Instruction.

The government was lodged in the Teacher and Censors.—The latter consisted of from twelve to sixteen of the oldest and most advanced boys. They were especially interested in the reputation of the School, and from their office perpetual conservators of the peace.

Out of the whole body, two Censors were appointed in rotation for each week, who had various and important duties to perform. It was their business to keep the daily and weekly Registers—to take charge of the property of the School—to mend the pens, and prepare the Writing-Books—to act as Monitors or Teachers, and to report absentees and delinquents.

The daily Register contained a minute detail of all the transactions of the day—the various lessons that were examined—the names of the boys at, and next the head, and of those at the foot of every class—the offences that were inquired into, and in fine every thing worth notice.

The weekly Register was an abstract from the daily. There was likewise a monthly Register, which was also called the Book of Merit, kept by the Master. Into it were transcribed the names of the boys oftenest at and next the head of their respective classes; the names of such as had distinguished themselves in any extraordinary manner---such as per-

formed voluntary tasks, which, if well done, were inserted, and the names of those whose good behaviour reflected credit on the School.

The rewards consisted of a few prizes at the end of the year, and one great advantage of the Register consisted in furnishing infallible evidence of those who best deserved them. About a month before the vacation, a Committee of boys was chosen by the whole School to inspect the Registers and to report the names of those who had excelled in the different departments throughout the year. This list, when completed, was hung up in the School, and any boy had a right to appeal and to have another Committee and a new inspection if he thought himself aggrieved. This right was only exercised in two or three instances, and resulted in confirming the Report of the first Committee, for as the Register of the transactions of the preceding day was publicly read every morning and was open to all—inaccuracies, if any occurred, were immediately corrected, so that few or no errors entered into the Weekly Register far less reached the Book of Merit. The rewards, therefore, were not for excelling during a few days or a few months but through the whole year. A boy must have been the best Latin or Greek Scholar in his class---the best Arithmetician---the best Civil Historian --the best Geographer---the best behaved, &c. for the season before he could be entitled to a prize for excelling in any of these respects, and all this must be proved by records regularly kept during the whole period. This plan not only kept up a great degree of harmless

emulation, but effectually prevented any heart-burning or suspicion as to the justice of the reward, and altogether relieved the Master from the personal responsibility.

The punishments in a day school cannot be so completely modified as where all the pupils are under the immediate superintendance of the Master, and at a distance from their Parents,

In the latter case, corporal punishments may with good management be entirely dispensed with; but this can scarcely be effected when the scholars are much at home, and neglected or indulged by their Parents. It is, nevertheless, certain, that by making a boy's rank depend on his behaviour and acquirements and keeping up a constant exertion and watchfulness it may be nearly accomplished. The punishments most in use were to commit lines to memory—double tasks—confinement, (but not in the dark) when it could be enforced.—For great perverseness—habitual negligence of school business or immoral acts—swearing, lying or pilfering, corporal punishment was sometimes inflicted.—This being the most painful duty of the Teacher, and it having been long his opinion that under favourable circumstances such punishments might be laid aside, every precaution was taken to avoid them or lessen their number. The most effectual remedy was found in the institution of regular trials.

When a boy was accused of any offence not apparent to the Master, a minute investigation took place in the face of the whole School—a Jury was some-

times formed, and no punishment followed till after the clearest conviction.—To punish arbitrarily is not only frequently unjust on the part of the Master, but is attended with the most pernicious effects on the pupil.

Sometimes security for good behaviour was exacted, and if a boy happened to be very much addicted to the fault of which he had been convicted, he found great difficulty in procuring sureties, because his subsequent default would bring upon them a punishment of tasks, lines, &c., and frequently none of his school-fellows would risk themselves in his favour.—This commonly produced a most salutary effect. Boys were seen going round the School begging their School-fellows to become security for their good behaviour, and when refused, pleading for this once and promising never again to be guilty.—Such a process could not fail of being useful, and had far more influence than any thing the master could say, as they heard from their fellows in the plainest language the opinion entertained of them by the whole School.

In extraordinary cases, but of rare occurrence, and when the fault was aggravated, the guilty boy was put in coventry for a few days—never longer than a week.—During this time, no boy was to speak to, or play with him, or have any communication with him during the play hours. This punishment never failed of having the desired effect.

By having recourse in this manner to the boys themselves in the regulation and government of the School, the Master was relieved from much painful

responsibility—the patient investigation of facts interested all the boys and brought them to the same conclusion—the culprit was satisfied by the fairness of his trial, of the justice of his sentence, and the pain which he experienced during the inquiry was very often considered a sufficient punishment.

To punish a boy without hearing him and examining carefully into the matter ought never to be admitted; and a little experience will satisfy every Teacher that by associating his pupils as much as possible with him in the discipline of the School, his praise or censure will be confirmed by the public voice, because there can exist no suspicion of partiality.—The punishment awarded is likewise rendered much more impressive, and the boys acquire some idea of jurisprudence, and a knowledge of the principles of justice.

PROCEEDINGS OF A DAY.—The scholars were arranged in classes for each branch of study according to their proficiency. Thus the boy who stood at the head of a Latin Class might be third or fourth among Arithmeticians, and a boy at the foot of Virgil might appear very respectable in the classes of Civil and Natural History, &c.

Although it be not of much importance in giving the proceedings of a day which we take, yet it may be proper to remark that some things were not called up daily, but only once or twice a week—thus :—On Monday, the class in Elocution was examined—On Tuesday, Civil History in the forenoon, and in the afternoon, Arithmetic—Wednesday, Natural History ;

Thursday, Geography—Friday, English Grammar—Saturday, Religion and Composition. Premising these things, the ordinary routine was as follows :—

At nine o'clock the School convened ;—Prayers.—The Register of the preceding day was read by the Censor—the highest class, consisting of the most advanced boys in the School who no longer belonged to the common classes, read in turn a portion of History, either ancient or modern as it happened, the Grecian, Roman and modern Histories, being read in regular order—Remarks were made upon the passage by the head Master—Questions asked of the boys, to ascertain whether they had been attentive—references were made to the Geography and antiquities, &c. and the boy who could best answer took the head.

During this time the second Master and Monitors heard the different English Reading classes. At half past nine the exercises given out the preceding evening were called up. These consisted of translations from English into Latin, and Latin into English ; Sense and Nonsense verses ; Problems in the Mathematics, &c.

At ten o'clock the Latin classes formed to go through their lessons which had been given out the afternoon before. These lessons were commonly short, but examined with patient minuteness. Reference was made in the higher classes to the manners, habits, customs and laws—to the antiquities and Geography of the nation, and to the Biography of the persons mentioned—the beauties of the passage were pointed out, whether of sentiment, description, expression, &c.

The Greek classes were exercised in the same manner.

At half-past eleven the classes formed for writing—exactly at twelve, the word “compare” was pronounced, and the boys of each class arranged themselves in the order in which they had been placed the previous day.—The Master examined and arranged them anew, corresponding to the excellence of the entire performance.

At twelve, one of the weekly classes exercised for an hour in a way to be mentioned hereafter.—At one, the School was dismissed for an hour.

Here it may be observed that the boys were not confined daily all this period from nine to one. The younger boys were allowed certain intervals for recreation, and the elder boys one such interval.

At two o'clock, the Mathematical classes were examined. These comprised Algebra, Euclid, Trigonometry, &c. During their examination the lower classes of English Reading were again exercised.

At three, the Classics, as in the morning—at four, Prayers, after which the School was dismissed.

ON TEACHING THE CLASSICS.—In preparing their lessons, the boys were taught to pay the utmost attention to the acquisition of a correct knowledge of the Grammar, and this attention was continued during the whole time that they remained at School.—So soon as a new class got through the declensions, a few words were given from the vocabulary to be committed to memory in the evening, and next mor-

ning these words were repeated, and afterwards declined. This was done backwards and forwards and by asking different cases, and the rules were carefully applied at the proper places—thus—suppose Dominus, a Lord :---Decline it backwards? The boy begins---Ablative plural, Dominis---Vocative plural, Domini---Accusative plural, Dominos, &c.

Another boy is asked---what is the Vocative Singular? Domine—O A Lord. Why Domine? The Nominative in us of the Second Declension makes the Vocative in e. What is the Latin for a Stone? Lapis. What Declension? The third. How is the third Declension known? By the Genitive Singular in is, and the Dative in i. Decline it? Nom. Singular, Lapis, a Stone—Genitive Singular, Lapidis, of a Stone—&c. Another boy may be asked to decline it backwards, or cases at random, with Stones; of Stones &c. Decline Opus? Why opus in the Accusative Singular? Neuter nouns of the second and third declensions have the Nominative, Accusative and Vocative alike in both numbers. In the same way all the words were declined, and such a quickness attained that the question was scarcely pronounced, when it was answered.

The same minuteness was observed with Adjectives. They were shown to be like two or three substantives of different declensions joined together: they were declined backwards and forwards, and with and without the article: cases were asked at random and the rules applied, and the boys were exercised in every

possible way, till they answered with the utmost rapidity and correctness.

The examination of the Verbs was equally minute. After becoming familiar with declining them regularly in the order of their moods and tenses, questions were promiscuously asked : Repeat the participles ? Decline the Future of the Indicative backwards ? Suppose, Amo : The boy begins. Third person plural, illi amabunt, they shall or will love &c. Give me the second persons singular of the whole Verb ? the boy commences, second person singular, tu Amas, thou lovest or dost love, tu amabas &c.---tu amavisti &c. &c. : and so giving the second persons through the whole verb. What is the Latin for love thou, or do thou love ? To love or to be loved ? How many parts of the Verb signify to Love. A few words from the Latin Vocabulary to be declined in this manner constituted the lessons to be prepared in the evening, for a part of the first year, and by this means the boys acquired a considerable number of Latin vocables. The same minuteness of examination was continued as long as they remained at School.

In Corderius or *Selectæ e Profanis*, two lines were for a time thought a sufficient task, and the preparation was divided into three distinct lessons. First : the words were declined one by one as already described : their derivations ascertained, and as minutely examined as those formerly taken from the vocabulary : this was called *Analysing* or *Parsing* the lesson. Second : the translation into English was the second lesson, and here also reference was made to

cases and tenses, declensions and conjugations.—Thirdly: the application of the Rules of Syntax was made a third lesson.

This was the mode of examination throughout the whole course.—In the third year the translation and application of the Rules of Syntax were commonly united, but it was not before the end of that year, or beginning of the Fourth, that the Parsing, the translation and application of the Rules of Syntax were joined in one lesson. The length of the tasks was gradually increased, to four or five lines of Corderius—a short Chapter of Eutropius or Cornelius Nepos—twenty or thirty lines in Virgil or Horace, but till the last year the lessons were short. The great advantage of their shortness consisted in this,—that to hear them minutely, and make the pupils understand them thoroughly did not require more time than the various business of the day allowed; and although two or three lives in Cornelius Nepos—two Books of Cæsar, &c. were commonly as much as were read in each author, yet many in each class became so familiar with the style and manner of the writer as to be able to translate *ad aperturam libri*, before another book was introduced.

When Parsing, sentences on the subject of the lesson to be turned into Latin, on the instant, were asked.—Thus—suppose a class was reading the life of Hannibal, and the Battle of Cannæ the subject—after examining a boy on a particular word, the master would ask him to turn into Latin—“It is reported that Hannibal after obtaining the victory at Cannæ,

“was in great perplexity, whether he should march directly to Rome, or return to Capua.”—He would ask another.—“The Romans were not discouraged at this memorable defeat, and were so far from suing for peace, that they prepared for a more vigorous prosecution of the war,” &c.—This method of asking sentences was begun early, and they were made more and more difficult according to the advancement of the class.

About the middle of the third year, short pieces of ancient History were dictated to the boys to be turned into Latin. These pieces consisted of some curious anecdote, or memorable event. For this exercise, which was done in School on Tuesday, and sometimes also on Thursday morning, under the Masters eye, a limited portion of time was given. At other times passages of the authors which the classes were reading were ordered to be translated into good English, neatly written; this was commonly an evening exercise. Printed translations were never admitted, for although they may save some trouble and labour to the teacher, he will seldom be gratified by the solid improvement of his pupils, nor will they attain by such delusive assistance a substantial knowledge of the language.

It was not expected, however, that boys could overcome every difficulty themselves, and therefore a middle course was observed. They were encouraged to ask every thing not to be found in the Grammar or Dictionary while preparing their lessons; if not to be found it was carefully explained. For a time the

Master, after examining the parsing, read the lesson sentence by sentence, then put the words in their order, and gave a literal translation. In the higher classes, only passages of difficulty were explained, and at length no interpretation was given of any part except when solicited.

The good effect of this continued minuteness has been strikingly proved from the fact that few of the pupils thus taught have forgotten their Latin, and continue as perfect in their knowledge of the Grammar as when they left School.

In respect to scanning, more attention was paid to reading than to rules ; a very few only were committed to memory, nor was much reference made to this part of Grammar, till the boys had become, in a great degree, familiar with Latin verse. Accustomed to make first non-sense, and then sense verses, from the time they commenced Ovid, the subject of scanning became imperceptibly easy to the dullest capacity.

ON TEACHING MATHEMATICS.—The effect of pointing out the uses of the different branches of Mathematical science, from Arithmetic upwards, was very pleasant.

Thus, when the boys were learning the application of Trigonometry to heights and distances they were required to make their own Scales and Quadrants—all the lines on Gunter's Scale—their uses, and the method of constructing them were explained, and when each boy had finished his Scale and Quadrant, we proceeded with them to measure the height of Trees and Steeples, and the breadth of Bays and Ri-

vers, and nothing could exceed the pleasure which they felt on finding the result nearly as correct as when done by instruments constructed by the most eminent Artists. For Surveying they made circles, and semi-circles, adjusted levels, and made chains of cords; then they took the necessary angles, measured the different lines, and with their poles and squares measured the offsets and brought out answers as correct as those who used the Theodolite and Chain, the construction of which was sufficiently explained to them by the pains they were obliged to take in making their own instruments.

In Dialling, they made Dials of all descriptions, and while thus employed occasion was taken to point out to them the use of Chronology, and how necessary it is to the right arrangement and understanding of History.

Book-Keeping, when taught in classes was soon rendered easy and familiar to common understandings. One boy was merchant, his class-fellows were purchasers, and in this way a new set of books was got up with every new class.

Notwithstanding the variety of the branches taught, the Masters labour, exclusive of unremitting attention, was not so great as may at first be supposed, and he seldom had occasion for more than one assistant.— In all well regulated Schools there very soon arises a sort of traditionary knowledge, which is continually accumulating. Besides when a new class is formed there are commonly some boys remaining who were in the former and who join again, either because they

have not acquired so perfect a knowledge of the subject as was desirable, or because they were so young when first introduced, that a repetition is considered advantageous. In either case they become very useful auxiliaries to the Teacher, by explaining to their companions the general method of proceeding, and many little matters which the Master might overlook, or find tedious and irksome to dwell upon with the necessary minuteness.

It is farther to be observed, that in such Schools, the younger boys by witnessing daily the higher classes proceeding in their studies, acquire imperceptibly a number of preliminary ideas and conceptions, which greatly facilitate their future progress when they come to the same branches of knowledge.

It is in this that the advantage of a public over a private education is most easily and strikingly illustrated. A boy in a large School becomes familiar with numbers—with angles—triangles—squares—circles—rectangles, &c. long before he is admitted into the classes where they become an object of study: while a boy of equal capacity, taught privately, having neither seen nor heard any thing about them till he is called upon to study them, has many preliminary difficulties to overcome, which in the case of the other have been already removed. In the one case the Teacher is relieved from much tedious detail, and in the other the boy may take a dislike at a science on the outset, which under more favorable circumstances he would have liked and excelled in.

I have said that each day had one class peculiar to itself which required a particular description.

Monday—**ELOCUTION.**--This class consisted of such boys as were no longer attached to any of the English reading classes, and were already tolerable readers. Two of these in rotation challenged each two boys to read a passage either in prose or verse. The challenge was given one Monday to be answered the next, and could not be refused. The challengers selected different pieces from Walker, Murray or Enfield, &c. Thus six boys out of the class read every Monday, and the best readers were marked in the Register. It was considered disgraceful in the challengers not to gain, and if negligence appeared either in the challengers or challenged, they were obliged to commit the passage to memory. This class never failed to keep up a great degree of excitement.

In addition to this method, debates were formed out of the Elocution class, as follows :—four of the principal boys were selected—two ministerial and two opposition, who were called Chiefs, and had the principal speeches. To fill up the debate which consisted perhaps of seven or eight on each side, the ministerial chiefs were allowed the first choice out of the elocution class—the opposition chiefs had the second choice—the ministerial the third, and so on till each had the number required. Sometimes they requested leave to choose a boy who did not belong to the Elocution class, and thus assisted the Master by their discernment in advancing boys from the common reading classes, who might for a time have been

overlooked. Great judgment was frequently shown by the Chiefs in appropriating the parts among their followers—sometimes they requested the Masters assistance. When the School happened to be full, two debates were at times got up, but whether one or two, the mode of proceeding was exactly the same.

In this exercise the responsibility was spread over a number of boys, and the diligence and zeal exerted by the different chiefs and their companions to gain the victory was in most cases very great.

At the end of one or two weeks a trial was made, and if any boy appeared careless or negligent he was reported. Sometimes he was directed by the Master to repeat his part to him next morning; sometimes, but rarely he was turned out of the Debate and another chosen in his room. This was considered a most severe punishment, and the more distressing as it was in consequence of the representations of their fellows.

After one or two trials the day of decision was appointed, and the debate or debates were heard in the presence of the whole School. It is not easy to describe the excitement which generally appeared on such occasions.—The greatest attention was paid to the different speakers.—The Master commonly employed a Committee to mark the smallest error, and he was himself careful to note every impropriety in tone, or sense, or accuracy. When the debate was ended, he compared his remarks with those of the Committee, and after weighing carefully both sides

he pronounced his decision. So perfect were the debates often said that it was extremely difficult to determine in favor of either side ; but in no instance that the remembrance was the decision appealed from, for not only were the grounds on which it rested stated, but the Chiefs were encouraged to speak if they had any thing to mention in behalf of their respective sides. Perhaps the warm interest taken by the Master in these exercises gave them more importance with the boys, for in a long series of years they never ceased to be exceedingly popular, although they were attended with much labour, for no part of the usual business of the School was omitted or suspended on their account.

Tuesday—**CIVIL HISTORY CLASS.**—This class commonly consisted of between twenty and thirty boys ; the mode of proceeding was peculiar.

The portion of History on which the examination was to take place, had been given out on the previous Tuesday.

1st. Each boy was obliged to produce twenty questions relating to the period, with their answers neatly written on a clean slip of paper. If any presumed to copy from another he lost his privilege or standing in the class for that day ; but copying, as it was considered mean, seldom happened.

2nd. Besides the twenty questions prepared for the inspection of the Master, each boy was expected to collect a great number of questions, which he preserved on another slip of paper or treasured up in his memory for the purpose of getting up in the class.

The examination of the class began with the boy at the foot, asking a question of the one immediately above him—if answered, then the second boy from the foot asked the third, and so on through the class. If it happened, as it frequently did, that the boy asked could not answer, the questioner answered for him and took his place. The loser was again asked by the next boy below, and so on till he did answer, or reached the foot of the class.

To comprehend this mode of examination it appears necessary to be still more minute.—Suppose, that the questions asked from the foot upwards are answered till you come towards the middle of the class—for example, the twelfth boy from the foot asks the thirteenth a question, and receiving no answer, or a wrong one, answers it himself and takes his place, becoming the thirteenth boy.—Now instead of proceeding to ask the fourteenth boy, he waits till the eleventh boy asks the loser, now the twelfth boy, who again loses if he cannot answer, and is questioned by the tenth boy, and so on till he does answer or reaches those who are also defaulters, or the foot of the class. Then the thirteenth boy proceeds to ask the fourteenth, and if he fail to answer, the thirteenth answers and takes his place, and then again waits till the loser is settled as before. By this process, which works easily and rapidly, the boys are kept upon the alert, and many questions are asked, and many changes take place in the class, before the examination reaches the head.

After proceeding three times round the class in this way, which generally required a good deal of time,

the boys were restricted from asking questions from their papers, and could only ask from memory.—The spirit kept up in this class was almost incredible—one hour generally, and sometimes two hours have been consumed in its examination, but to prevent too long a time from being occupied, and yet preserve all the advantages of the class, these rules were adopted :

A boy asking a question not within the period—or one which he could not answer himself—or a question which had been already asked, lost his privilege of asking for the day, but was still obliged to answer any boy below him who had not yet lost his privilege.

These rules were found to be effectual, for within the hour (with the exception of two or three instances in a season) the questions were exhausted.

This mode of examination enables boys by private efforts to obtain immediate elevation in their classes, and of accumulating, in a way exceedingly agreeable to themselves, a great deal of information.

Tuesday Afternoon.—**ARITHMETIC.**—The lower classes were confined for a time to mental Arithmetic, and before they were engaged in attending to Rules, they had made a very considerable progress in the science. Arithmetic is always a favorite study with boys, if properly taught, and is well adapted to exercise their reasoning faculties ; but it will be found advantageous to avoid technical forms and expressions as much as possible, until the detailed plans for which they are substituted, are thoroughly understood.

The utility of Arithmetic in discipling the mind, and in transacting the various business of life, is only

part of its commendation, for it is also the foundation, or rather perhaps the instrument or key, without which we cannot proceed to the higher branches of abstract science. Much, therefore, depends upon its early acquisition, for it is as essential to the Scholar as to the man of business.

In mental Arithmetic, the most simple and easy questions were at first proposed, without the aid of signs, and the answers were either given orally or written upon Slates.

Examples.—How many Fingers have you ?

John gave six Apples to George, nine to Alexander, and five to Philip—how many did he give away ?

A man purchased a barrel of Cider containing thirty gallons, but it leaked out seventeen in carrying it home—how many gallons had he left ?

If a Horse can run seven miles in one hour—how many miles will he run in eight hours ?

What is the third of six ?

If you have thirty six shillings—how many yards of linen can you buy at four shillings per yard ?

Bought nine bushels of apples at three shillings per bushel—how much did they come to ?

Charles had twenty marbles and gave one fourth to John—how many did he give him ?

In this manner the pupil may be gradually conducted through the whole of Arithmetic, rather as a pleasure than a task.

The combinations being taught by numbers, at first small and familiar, the mind opens by degrees to those that are more extensive and complex, till

questions in interest and discount, and the value of articles of various numbers and prices become easy.

In this way fractions are illustrated without much difficulty—Even questions in Chronology—whether a certain year is Bissextile or not ; the age of the Moon ; squares of large numbers ; extracting roots of numbers, &c. It is indeed almost incredible to conceive the perfection which boys, by long practice, may attain in mental Arithmetic, and the quickness with which they will solve the most difficult problems.—But it was not considered profitable to push this branch beyond a certain point, as the time it would have required was necessary for more important acquisitions.

ARITHMETIC.—After some progress, mentally, the pupils were carefully taught the application of every rule on which they were entering, and the reasons why certain technical processes are adopted.

Each separate class produced one or more sums, which had been given them on the previous Arithmetic day, neatly calculated upon their slates. The work was carefully examined, after which every figure was blotted out and the operation performed under the Master's eye. A boy was pitched upon as leader, who gave, with an audible voice, the rules and reasons for every step, and as he proceeded the rest silently worked along with him writing down figure for figure, but ready to correct him, should he commit any blunder. When the leader had finished, the work on each boys slate was inspected by the Teacher, and the errors, if any, pointed out. This being done the work was again blotted out and another boy called

upon to go through the process as before, the class working with him ; the operation on each boys slate was examined a third time and then blotted out, and so on till each boy, if it was judged necessary, had gone through the work as leader. Sometimes the leaders made use of a large black board and performed the operation with chalk.

By this method the principles were gradually fixed in the mind, and he must have been a very dull boy indeed who did not understand every question thoroughly before he left it.

There was also this further advantage in this method, that it was pursued without interrupting the pupils progress in any other useful study. The same method was adopted in teaching the elements of Algebra, and with equal benefit. It is indeed laborious with very new classes, but were it to continue laborious, it ought to be adopted, if found advantageous, for he that is anxious to spare labour ought not to be a public teacher. The knowledge of Arithmetic was much facilitated by rejecting all those rules which are merely artificial, as Reduction and the Rule of Three Direct, and inverse, and those that are formed for particular applications of the same principle—as Barter, Loss and Gain, Fellowship, Equation of payments, &c.

Wednesday.—NATURAL HISTORY.—The method adopted in this class was almost the same with that used in Civil History. A portion of the subject was given out—the Atmosphere for example—the figure

of the Earth—Volcanoes—Earthquakes—the Winds, or the use of Mountains, &c.

On the portion given every boy produced twenty questions with their answers neatly written, after which they proceeded to ask questions of one another as already described in Civil History. When the class came to Animated Nature several animals were given for one lesson. Nearly the same excitement was kept up here as in Civil History, and as keen contentions for the first place.

ENGLISH GRAMMAR.—In teaching English Grammar very little use was made of the Grammar Book. By continual Parsing—turning poetry into prose—avoiding technicalities and appealing to the common sense of the boys, the progress was rapid and correct. A sentence in poetry or prose, according to the advancement of the class, was given out, and the Parsing of one or two lines of it was required to be carefully written,—the remainder of the lesson was examined orally.—In this way English Grammar was acquired in a very easy manner, and never seemed to give dull boys any great trouble. The superior classes read portions of Murray's larger Grammar, which were explained to them, but they were not required to commit them to memory.

GEOGRAPHY.—This study is always a great favourite with boys. I began with teaching the meaning of the ordinary geographical terms. After which I proceeded in nearly the same manner as in Civil and Natural History.—Sweden, for example, was given,—Twenty questions respecting its Geography

were produced neatly written by each boy.—Then they proceeded to ask questions of one another, taking care not to wander from the subject. In this way the Geography of the country under examination was completely exhausted. The higher boys were exercised in the use of the Globes—drawing Maps—tracing Voyages, particularly those round the world by eminent Navigators, &c.

ENGLISH COMPOSITION.—On Saturday a short lecture was delivered to the School, and care was taken to make it interesting.—Sometimes the lecture was on a moral subject, and sometimes on History or the form of human body, &c. so as to produce variety. The principal boys formed into a class were directed to bring on Monday morning written notes of the lecture. These were carefully examined and corrected—inelegant and ungrammatical expressions were pointed out, and Rhetorical figures explained as they occurred, &c. By this means the boys became imperceptibly acquainted with the rules of Composition—learned to clothe their ideas in words and to pursue trains of thought.

From these notes, thus corrected, a general view of the lecture was directed to be prepared by the class to be shewn on Thursday. This was frequently so well executed as to equal, and sometimes surpass the original lecture delivered. To vary the exercise, a subject was sometimes given and books pointed out which might supply materials; but there was a strict rule against using the words or expressions.—

This method of teaching composition was found exceedingly successful, many boys being able to write their thoughts upon any subject required without being aware that they had been taught composition.

In regard to Religion, the Church Catechism was taught the children of those who belonged to the Established Church only. To all who chose to attend, the Scriptures were read and explained, and a general course of religious instruction given : but the Master never forgetting that the School was a public one and open to all christian persuasions, conducted this delicate part of his duty with so much prudence that no complaint was ever made during the period of twenty-five years by any denomination. The Roman Catholic children had liberty to withdraw or to employ themselves in other matters ; but this was a liberty of which they seldom availed themselves, for their Parents, as well as those of other denominations, on being made acquainted with the system pursued, were anxious, a very few excepted, that their children should attend.

GENERAL REMARKS.

An advantage of no small importance was found to result from the variety of the things taught in the School, namely, that there was hardly any boy that did not appear with credit in some one class. At an early period of the School a boy was sent whose parents were poor but whose uncle had sufficient interest to place him at Woolwich if he could be prepared before sixteen to stand the necessary examination. He had been with different teachers, and was pronounced too stupid to

learn any thing and was already fourteen.—On examination, he was found exceedingly deficient—he could neither read nor write with any propriety—yet as his all depended upon his progress, and as he had hardly two years to prepare himself the master was exceedingly anxious to do something for him. After several attempts he began under the system adopted to comprehend Arithmetic, and although it had been declared that he never could be made to understand Addition, he very soon grasped the whole Science.—He was tried with Euclid, and succeeded.—The Elements of Algebra were attempted, and with profit, and though naturally sluggish, it was found that he had some turn for Mathematics. Encouraged by the progress which he made in these branches, he began to grow ashamed of his writing and English reading, in which he had hitherto made no improvement, and soon made fair progress in both; and although he was still very slow in acquiring a knowledge of Latin, he attained a considerable accuracy in the Grammar before he left School and could read a little in Cæsar. The consequence was, that he passed the Mathematical part of his introductory examination at Woolwich with great commendation; and the Latin part, which is I believe easy, without censure, and in a period unusually short received a Commission in the Artillery.

Another boy had been at School upwards of two years and given indication of no disposition to learn. His progress was hardly perceptible—younger boys were daily leaving him behind—he was tried in various classes without success, and the Master almost

despaired. Though by no means qualified for the Civil History class, he was placed in it as a last resort—he got interested—he brought his questions better written than ever he had done any thing else—he gained two or three places—he was roused as from a lethargy and soon reached half way up the class. The Master relieved from the pain which his former backwardness had given him, spoke to him privately, encouraging him to try in his other classes—he next began to excel in Arithmetic—then in Geography, and at length he left the foot of his Latin classes, where he had remained almost immoveable for years, and although never a first rate Scholar, he left School with considerable attainments.

Many similar examples might be given of boys remaining for a time exceedingly dull, and beginning first to move in some of those branches which are not usually taught at Schools, or in a way very different from that described.

It will be seen that in the system pursued the boys in a great degree taught themselves, the teacher acting in many instances merely as a director. This circumstance has induced a minuteness of detail which may appear trifling to those who are not in the habit of appreciating the magnitude of the interest confided by Parents to Teachers, as well as to such (and the number is very great) who consider themselves adepts in the science of education, and who commonly declare that their only reason for sending their children to School is the want of time to instruct them at home. But we who are still wedded to the

opinion that it is one thing to be able to learn and another to be able to teach, think that much yet remains to be done to facilitate the communication of knowledge; and if it appear that something in this way has been accomplished in the foregoing detail, it will not be deemed of small importance by those who believe that it is very possible to possess vast stores of knowledge without being able to impart them even to the willing and anxious pupil; and that to fix the volatile, stimulate the sluggish, and overcome the obstinate, demands an acquaintance with the human mind not quite innate, nor likely to be gained without some experience.

One feature which it was the anxious wish of the Teacher to impress upon the system was to relieve the Master as much as possible from acting as an arbitrary judge whether in deciding upon ordinary lessons or awarding prizes and punishments.—It will be seen that in most cases the boys themselves were called upon to examine and decide upon the conduct of their fellows. By this plan, investigation was conducted by the leading boys, and thus a barrier placed against frivolous accusation. Examinations of culprits were so complete as almost to preclude the possibility of injustice—nor in many years was an example known of a boy suffering a punishment that was not deserved and which he might have escaped had a few moments of explanation been allowed him.—No punishment was awarded without full proof—the accused was candidly heard as well as the accuser—witnesses on both sides were carefully examined, and

the verdict for the most part given by their fellows ; and thus the Master exercised his prerogative in a way so interesting and influential as to check those little disorders which will be constantly arising in every School while human nature shall retain its present qualities.

Another advantage of great importance to the well being of the School resulted from the manner of appointing Censors. It was the duty of them all to promote the peace and tranquility, and to preserve and extend the reputation of the seminary, and accordingly they could report delinquents without incurring the imputation of tale bearers, a character of all others the most obnoxious in Schools. This not only prevented many acts of oppression from being committed, which at other Schools remain unredressed, because the sufferers dare not become informers but protected most effectually the weak and timid from the tyranny which the elder boys are so apt to exert over them. It was not necessary for them to complain in person, as it was the acknowledged duty of the Censor to report all improper conduct. Moreover by this means querulousness and trifling complaints were repressed, the Censors acting often as mediators in matters of minor importance and restoring tranquility without referring to the master.

Silence was strictly enforced, for no fixed medium can ever be found between that degree of silence which may be sufficient for all useful purposes and noise and disorder. No boy was therefore allowed to speak except on the business of the class, nor to

move from his seat except at the pleasure of the Teacher.

In hearing the classes care was taken to make the business as interesting as possible.—For this purpose the lessons were always short and minutely examined, and never passed till thoroughly understood. During the preparation of the lesson, or before it was called up, the boys were encouraged to ask explanations of difficult passages, and to put questions about matters which they did not fully comprehend, all of which were listened to with patience and answered with candour, even when they were not very pertinent.—From the regular routine of lessons it is evident that much depends upon punctual attendance. So much inconvenience was felt even from the interference of the usual Holidays that they were given up except now and then that an afternoon was granted for a good copy of verses. But if a single play day was felt injurious how much more the irregular attendance of individuals. Besides the loss of time to the absentees themselves, the greatest inconvenience is incurred by the classes to which they belong. Their progress is impeded ; the equality between them and their fellows is rendered less complete, and much trouble becomes frequently necessary to investigate the cause of absence. Indeed the boy's taste for learning may be deeply injured in a very little time when they find on their return that they have lost ground ; and in a large School where every one is advancing a very short absence may leave them irrecoverably behind.—So deeply convinced am I of the great impor-

tance of boys attending with punctuality and good will, that notice has frequently been given to those Parents who were apt to indulge their children in holidays, that the Master would not be responsible for their progress and would much prefer the withdrawing them from the School than any longer permit irregular attendance. Indeed such parents have much to answer for, as we have known instances where this injudicious indulgence has altered the character of their children and their usefulness and happiness for life.

In the lower English Reading and Arithmetic classes boy-teachers or monitors were frequently employed. And in the Latin and Greek classes the superior boys were often directed to assist the duller ones in their preparation. It exercised their discretion and was most useful to them as a means of improvement, and at the same time the business of the School was facilitated when the lessons came to be repeated under the superintendance of the Teacher.

There were frequent repetitions and general reviews. In Latin and Greek, for example, the class was called upon to give an account of what had been read during the last fortnight or month; and to construe any passage pointed out by the Teacher. Also, leave was given them to ask questions of one another and the explanation of difficulties, by which means the whole matter was again brought before them and their memories completely refreshed.

General reviews consisted of forming the different classes in Arithmetic, in English Grammar, or in Geo-

graphy into one class, and asking questions promiscuously, taking care not to require of the younger boys any thing beyond what they had learned. In this way the elements and their whole progress were kept fresh in the minds of the higher boys, or they suffered the mortification of being corrected by those not half their age, and who had only as it were entered upon the subject.

These examinations were not taken up at exact intervals, nor with much previous notice, but they were certain, and while they produced many excellent effects, were so conducted as to be considered a recreation.

They who take the trouble to glance over their years at school, will call to mind the difficulty which they found in discovering the practical use of many things which they were obliged to learn. The business of the School seemed to be totally different from any thing out of doors, and to have no connection with the business of common life. To remove this as early as possible was one of the advantages aimed at in this system. Mental Arithmetic was applied to objects around us and in our hands. Geography to the local knowledge of the learners; figures were made of the School premises and the play ground; these were so extended as to take in the town, the roads leading to it, the Lake, &c. Geometry commenced by familiarizing them to the figures formed by the walls, flooring and ceiling of the rooms, or furniture, and the comparing them with diagrams, and the defini-

tions. This method is capable of being carried a great length, and of rendering the use of almost every branch sufficiently plain to be comprehended by very young boys: for all the sciences have been discovered by practical men, and were first studied for their immediate use in the business of life; thus Botany, for the medical value of plants; Astronomy, for the use of Husbandry, Navigation, &c.

We mentioned the Book of Merit, in which voluntary tasks were inserted if well done. These consisted of translations from Latin and Greek into English, prose and verse; original essays; reports of lectures and mathematical demonstrations, &c. The little boys produced spontaneous tasks or exercises according to their advancement, such as a good letter; a solution of a question in arithmetic, &c. Very superior exercises were frequently offered, and the opening of the book was hailed by the whole School as a sort of jubilee.

The arrangements detailed do not seem to provide for what is called a mere English or Commercial education, but experience hath taught us, that with boys of ordinary capacities, all the branches pointed out for the different periods may be carried on together, and that by lessening their number we expose the pupil to idleness, without obtaining any countervailing advantage. Boys advance faster in any one study by having several occupations than by confining their attention to that alone, and I feel convinced that a boy by the time he is sixteen may acquire as much classical knowledge, together with all the branches recom-

mended, as if he had been entirely confined to Greek and Latin, and vice versa. And I know from facts, that the boys who remained the usual time at School, and took the full benefit of every thing taught, instead of being inferior to those declining to study the classics and who confined themselves to what is called a business education, were far superior in their knowledge of Arithmetic and keeping accounts, &c.

CONCLUSION.

We had only one annual exhibition when the friends of the pupils were invited. The first day was employed in examining the boys in their Classical and Scientific acquirements. The Latin and Greek Classics were examined by the Master, in exactly the same manner as they daily were in School, after which the visitors were requested to ask them any questions that they thought proper. After this the Mathematical classes presented themselves. One was prepared to demonstrate any proposition within certain books of Euclid's Elements; or to solve equations in Algebra, with a certain scope. Another performed trigonometrical operations; and the younger boys were exercised in mental and mixed Arithmetic, the spectators being invited to propose questions.

The second day was taken up with debates, a variety of recitations, and exhibiting the mode of examining the classes in Civil and Natural History, Geography, &c. It was also usual on this day to recite one of Milman's, or Miss Moore's Sacred Dramas, in which the boys acquitted themselves, on most occasions,

with great success, and much to the delight of the audience. But the most interesting business of the day was the opening of the Book of Merit, and the distribution of the prizes. This was done by the committee which had been appointed by the boys themselves to inspect the Registers and make out a list of the successful competitors. The names were read one by one by a member of the committee, on which they came severally forward and received the prizes, the Master mentioning that it was for their excelling in such a class ; for extraordinary tasks, or for good behaviour. What was peculiarly delightful, their success, so far from producing envy, was accompanied with universal satisfaction. Their fellows looked upon them as an honour to the School, and secretly cherished the hope of being next year among the happy number.

Long as this detail may seem, many useful observations have been necessarily omitted, it being thought sufficient to touch only upon the leading and most important points. The great object of the whole system was to make the Scholars good as well as wise ; to lead them to the habitual exercise of that practical virtue which is founded upon the Divine principles of Christianity. To this all other attainments ought to be subordinate, and the Teacher should never forget that his instruction should not be merely for time, but also for Eternity. Much patience, and much perseverance, will be required in the fulfilment of his duties towards his scholars, and he will succeed, not so much by the vehemence, as the constancy and regu-

larity of his exertions. He must not expect always to witness the immediate fruit of his labours. Few, except those who have had long experience in teaching, would believe in the slowness with which some minds receive knowledge, and yet though long most unpromising, instances are found of their afterwards attaining to great intellectual eminence. The Teacher, therefore, ought never to despair, but patiently repeat his instruction and vary his subject till he discovers the key which fits the door of the understanding, and if he can introduce only one ray of light, a total and happy change may soon take place through all the mental faculties. The husbandman scatters his seed and hath long patience for it, and we are commanded, "in the morning to sow the seed, and in the evening to withhold not our hands, for we know not whether shall prosper either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." "Of all the men we meet with, (says Locke,) nine parts out of ten are what they are, good or evil, useful or not, by their education."

I remain,

Dear Sir,

Your most Obedient Serv't.

JOHN STRACHAN.

